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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

CONCEPT OF THE ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE  
DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS  
IN THE COLD WAR

THE PROBLEM:

1. To analyze the scope and mission of the Psychological Strategy Board and the tasks of the Director and the Staff; and to derive therefrom the qualifications and approximate composition of the staff.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. The purpose of the Executive Directive of 4 April 1951, is

"to authorize and provide for <sup>the</sup> more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations"

3. The Psychological Strategy Board is responsible for the

"formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort"

4. There is provided a Director, designated by the President, responsible under the Board for directing its activities. He is assisted by a staff, the organization, qualifications and size of which, within limits set by the Board, are established by him.

DISCUSSION

5. The Directive creates no new operating agency. It results from a general sense of need for harnessing the disparate resources of existing departments and agencies responsible for executing various psychological operations and intensifying the national effort. It includes under the term "psychological operations" a wide spectrum of overt and covert activities - from propagation of truthful foreign information to subversive operations of both a moral and a physical character.

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6. In face of the peculiar challenge of Bolshevist Russia, the primary objective of intensifying these unconventional national efforts is to win the cold war and prevent declared global war. Failing this, the secondary objective is to create conditions favorable to our orthodox forces in the event of war. If all our resources available for psychological operations were brought to bear consistently, progressively and cumulatively, the chances of keeping the peace or speedily winning the war would be immeasurably increased. If that is true, the establishment of an organization for exploiting these resources should be considered a major national project. It should not be undertaken with half measures.

7. Psychological operations are in no manner a substitute for sound political-diplomatic actions, strong armed forces or alert intelligence. Psychological operations reflect the strength of all these but will always be subsidiary or supplementary to orthodox governmental operations. Therefore, the functions of the Psychological Strategy Board are not in competition or conflict with normal operations of the departments and agencies. Instead, the Board coordinates and steers the resources of their psychological units into profitable channels toward national goals.

8. Soviet Russia and the satellites employ every instrumentality of government, orthodox and unorthodox, in fighting the cold war. Foreign offices back up their propaganda; ground, sea and air forces shift and maneuver in support of the psychological war. It is difficult to say whether orthodox forces supplement psychological operations or the contrary - which is dog and which is tail. All Soviet resources are deployed actively or potentially in support of war that is now being waged. As long as they have the initiative, our conventional planning for a future declared war is constantly thrown off balance and tends to be confused or unrealistic.

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9. Conventional concepts and plans based upon a D-Day which no man can predict lead us into the dilemma of two dangerous extremes. Either our state of preparedness will be inadequate on the critical day or over-mobilization long-drawn-out will be economically destructive. Particularly is this true because war plans are based upon the assumption that the cold war cannot be decisive. Planning would be more realistic if it were assumed that the cold war could be won and, if won, could be decisive. This assumption would occasion a modification of conventional war plans but not in such manner or degree as to alter significantly the state of our preparedness at any particular future date. The assumption would, however, greatly enhance the importance to be attached to current cold war operations, enlarge the concept of such operations and ensure the availability of both active and potential national facilities (orthodox as well as unorthodox) in its conduct.

10. This conceptual background of the Psychological Strategy Board, the importance of the stakes involved, and the scope and variety of operations to be coordinated - these all are indicators of the requisite qualifications of the director and his staff.

11. Although the Board does not perform psychological operations, its responsibility to give impetus to an intensified psychological effort implies considerable power of decision in the initiation and control of major projects. Likewise, while the psychological operating units within the departments and agencies cannot be directed by the Board to carry out its programs, the individual members of the Board ex-officio are of such prestige as to create the presumption that the executing agencies will consider guidance approved by the members as being in effect mandatory.

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CONCLUSIONS

12. Keeping in mind this implied authority, the Board, Director and Staff should exercise functions comparable to both command and staff even though their explicit authority limits the nature of "command" to guidance. Otherwise expressed, the Director and Staff are responsible for the management of the psychological aspects of the national cold war effort. Since no single individual could have the competence or time to manage the global campaign, it seems evident that under the supervision of the Director, this management must be in part delegated to staff assistants. A workable arrangement would be to employ for this purpose regional and functional specialists, each of whom would be responsible for assisting in the formulation of and directly charged with steering his part of a coordinated global program.

13. More precision can now be given to the role of the Board, to the qualifications of the Director and to the composition and functions of the Staff.

THE BOARD

14. In the specific field of psychological operations the Board functions begin where the functions of the National Security Council leave off. The Council promulgates broad national policies and principles but its reports are too general to constitute blue-prints for implementation. The Board on the other hand adopts specific and practicable objectives and initiates action to attain them. The Board approves lines of action and programs which assign workable and coordinated tasks to the operating agencies.

15. The members of the Board will be able to give only limited personal time to the details of management of national psychological operations. However, their decisions, when translated into dynamic action programs by the Director and his Staff and promulgated to the Departments and Agencies, can give national purpose, consistency and continuity hitherto impossible in this field.

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16. Within the powers of the Board, the Director should be allowed a high degree of initiative to act promptly and flexibly in those fast-moving situations inherent in psychological warfare. He should be supported against bureaucratic inertia or obstruction in bringing to bear, at favorable opportunities, all national psychological resources in order to maintain the offensive in the cold war.

#### THE DIRECTOR

17. The Director should be a nationally known figure and have a broad background in international affairs. Preferably he should have experience in more than one aspect of the broad spectrum of activities comprised in psychological operations as defined in the President's Directive. He should be more a man of action than an intellectual analyst. He should be capable of quick and bold decisions within his authority, but methodical in directing long-range planning by his staff. By judgment and tact he should be able to inspire teamwork in operating departments and agencies.

18. His task is of such national importance as to deserve unhesitating support from the Board and the President himself.

As prescribed by the President's Directive, he shall:

- a. Be responsible for having prepared the programs, policies, reports, and recommendations for the Board's consideration,
- b. Sit with the Board and be responsible to it for organizing its business and for expediting the reaching of decisions,
- c. Promulgate the decisions of the Board,
- d. Ascertain the manner in which agreed upon objectives, policies, and programs of the Board are being implemented and coordinated among the departments and agencies concerned,
- e. Report thereon and on his evaluation of the national psychological operations to the Board together with his recommendations,
- f. Perform such other duties necessary to carry out his responsibilities as the Board may direct.

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### THE STAFF

19. The Staff should have responsibility under the Director for the performance of the following specific functions which cannot be delegated to operating agencies:

a. Within the framework of approved national policies, and as authorized by the Board, the formulation and promulgation in practical operating terms (not abstractions) of coordinated world-wide and regional

- (1) psychological policies,
- (2) psychological objectives,
- (3) psychological programs.

b. Giving impetus to the detailed planning and execution by the operating agencies,

c. Continuous evaluation of the results of operations, with a view to making prompt adjustments in the programs when necessary,

d. The preparation of required reports,

e. Its own secretariat-administrative duties.

20. The foregoing list inadequately reflects activities required to give vitality to the conduct of the cold war. It does, however, suggest the indispensability of dynamic personalities to give flesh and blood to the organization. If the Director and Staff give themselves up to pondering and planning, we shall have succeeded only in establishing another Ivory Tower. While they must plan systematically to the extent necessary to formulate sound strategic objectives and practical programs, the Director and his principal assistants should sense themselves as being full time "at the front" in the cold war as literally as commanders in orthodox war.

21. As principal aids the Director should have certain regional and functional chiefs (each with a few assistants) who should be outstanding experts in their respective geographic-political and functional areas. These principal subordinates represent in a sense the "commanders"

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of the regional operations. More accurately, as a group they might appropriately be called the:

Operational Coordination and Implementation Division

The specific regional Staff Sections suggested are:

- (a) Soviet Russia and European satellites,
- (b) China, South East Asia and South Asia,
- (c) Middle and Near East and Moslem North Africa,
- (d) British Commonwealth and Free Europe,
- (e) Latin America.

22. a. In intimate personal liaison with the corresponding regional heads of the operating agencies, the Chiefs of the foregoing staff sections exercise their steering-coordinating function within the terms of the approved policies, objectives, and programs formulated by the Strategy Group and the Plans and Programs Division. Also, in collaboration with the latter staff, they assist in all steps in the formulation of policies, objectives, and programs applicable to their respective regions. They follow the development of the operations, evaluate the results and keep the Director currently informed of modifications which may be required in the programs.

b. The regional chiefs should be empowered to furnish the authorized interpretation to operating agencies of approved policies, objectives and programs.

c. There should also be provisions for functional specialization as appropriate.

23. The other major responsibility of the staff is that of planning on the national level, that is, the formulation of policies, objectives and programs as guidance to the operating agencies. These major divisions of the staff might be called the Strategy Group and the Plans and Programs Division. These staff divisions, should be responsible for the formulation and communication to the operating departments and agencies of all types of formal guidance required to initiate the projects and purposes of the Board.

Strategy Group

24. This group sits at the call of the Director and is chaired by him. Its permanent membership should consist of the Director, the Board Designees and a small group of professionally skilled full-time consultants. In addition, Regional and Functional Implementers from the Operational Coordination and Implementation Division, as well as consultants from operating departments and agencies should sit with this group, when the subject of discussion requires.

25. In addition to routine business of the Staff, the Strategy Group considers policies, objectives and projects originated by the Board as well as those self-originated. When approved by the Board, they are passed to the Plans and Programs Division for formulation into coordinated guidances, plans or programs for promulgation to the operating agencies.

26. It is from the Strategy Group perhaps that the most imaginative and consecutive thinking should emerge. It is here that the global psychological aspects of the cold war are considered as a whole. The long-range objectives having been formulated, intermediate objectives are adopted and strategic moves to attain them are continuously studied. The initiative in the cold war is seized at each favorable opportunity. The broad terms of the action required are decided. The Plans and Programs Division then works out coordinated guidance or programs required by the operating agencies to initiate planning or immediate action, depending upon the nature and urgency of the operation.

Plans and Programs Division

27. This is the planning unit of the Staff which performs the mechanics of program planning. Its functions are to incorporate into coordinated guidances, plans or programs the strategic decisions and courses of action approved by the Board and to promulgate them to the operating agencies. In their final form these guidances, plans and programs, while of broad national scope and in a global framework,



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should constitute basic blueprints for action on the part of one or more of the operating agencies. They should not be permitted to degenerate into abstractions or generalities, but should be formulated only in terms of practicable tangible objectives.

28. A key nucleus of the Plans and Programs Division should be recruited from the only area of government where systematic and coordinated planning is really understood and practiced, namely, the armed services. These key planners could establish a pattern and instruct specialists, drawn from psychological operating agencies, in the essential mechanics of programming. Plans and programs should be kept realistic by intimate collaboration on an ad hoc or task basis of regional and functional specialists from the operating departments and agencies and from the Operational Coordination and Implementation Division.

#### SUMMARY OF CONCEPT

29. Planning and operational coordination should be based on the assumption that the cold war can be won. As a secondary responsibility only, should the Board permit the energies of the Staff to be diverted to planning wartime programs as distinct from current operations. A small nucleus of planners might appropriately be set apart for programming national plans for psychological warfare in wartime, but major consideration should be given to the current operations of the global conflict.

30. Remembering the D-Day for the cold war occurred several years ago, the plans and programs with which the Board will be primarily concerned are for a campaign being fought now. The Board and its Staff should conceive itself to function as the command and staff of an army in combat rather than as a department of defense preparing for a war to come.

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